"On the north shore of the river, directly facing the tumble-down fort, a new log-house was in course of erection by the Hudson's Bay Campnay. Work moves slowly in the North, and this log-house lay long unfinished. One fine day a canoe came floating down the lonely river; it held a solitary negro-pioneer, cook, trapper, vagrant, idler, or squatter, as chance suited him. This time the black paddler determined to squat by the half-finished log-house of the Company. Four years earlier he had dwelt for a season on this same spot. There were dark rumours afloat about him; he had killed his man it was averred; nay, he had repeated the pastime, and killed two men. He had robbed several mining shanties, and had to shift his residence more than once beyond the mountains on account of his mode of life. Altogether Nigger Dan, as he was called, bore an indifferent reputation among the solitary white man and his half-breed helpers at the post of St. John's. By the Indians he was regarded as something between a beaver and an American bear, and, had his head been tradeable as a matter of fur, I believe they would have trapped him to a certainty. But despite the hostile feelings of the entire community, Nigger Dan held stout possession of his shanty, and claimed, in addition to his hut, all the land adjoining it, as well as the Hudson's Bay Fort in course of erection. From his lair he issued manifestoes of a very violent nature. He planted stakes in the ground along the river-bank, upon which he painted in red ochre hieroglyphics of a menacing character. At night he could be heard across the silent river indulging in loud and uncalled-for curses, and at times he varied this employment by reciting

portions of the Bible in a pitch of voice and accent peculiar to gentlemen of colour. On the 12th of April, four days after my arrival at St. John's, my young host was the recipient of the following ultimatum.
I copy it verbatim:

'April 12.
Kenedy I hear by
Worne you that Com and Gett your
persnol property if eny you
have Got of my prmeeis In 24 hours And then keep
away from me because I shal Not betrubbld Nor trod
on only by her most Noble
Majesty
Government
(Sgd) D.T. Williams.'

'On the back appeared,--
'I have wated longe A-day for an ancer from that
Notis you toer Down and now It is my turn to tore
down-----'

"Although the spirit of loyalty which breathed through the latter portion of this document was most admirable, it is nevertheless matter for regret that Dan's views of the subject of "persnol property" were not those of a law-abiding citizen; unfortunately for me, both the Hudson's Bay claimant and the negro occupant appealed to me in support of their rival rights. What was to be done? It is true that be virtue of a commission conferred upon me some years earlier I had been elevated to the lofty title of justice of peace for Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories, my

brother justices consisting, I believe, of two Hudson Bay officials and three half-breed buffalo runners, whose collective wisdom was deemed amply sufficient to dispense justice over something like two million square miles. Nevertheless, it occurred to me that this matter of disupted ownership was one outside even the wide limits of my jurisdiction. To admit such want of jurisdiction would never have answered. "Rupert's Land and the North-West" carried with them a sense of vast indefinite power, that if it were once shaken by an admission of non-competency, two million square miles, containing a population of one twenty-fourth of a wild man to each square mile, might have instantly become a prey to chaotic crime. Feeling the inutility of my lofty office to deal with the matters in question, I decided upon adopting a middle course, one which I have every reason to believe upheld the full majesty of the law in the eyes of the eight representatives of the Canadian, African, and American races of man, now assembled around me. I therefore issued a document which ran thus:

Judicial Memorandum.

"Various circumstances having occurred in the neighborhood of the Hudson's Bay Fort, known as St. John's, on the Peace River, of a nature to lead to the assumption that a breach of the peace is liable to arise out of the question of disputed ownership, in a plot of land on the north shore of the river, on which the Hudson's Bay Company have erected buildings to serve as their future place of business, and on which it is asserted one Daniel Williams, a person of colour, formerly lived, this is to notify all persons concerned in

this question, that no belief of ownership, no former or present possession, will be held in any way to excuse or palliate the slightest infringement of the law, or to sanction any act of violence being committed, or to occasion any threats being made use of by any of the said parties which might lead to a breach of the peace.

"Executed by me, as Justics of the Peace for Rupert's Land and the North-West, this 22nd day of April, 1873.

Signed, &c.,&., "

F.W. Beatton, Fort St. John

Mar. 4, 1922 (letter to Mr. H.A. Cadenhead, Half Way River, B.C.

....."he was a Nigger from the U.S., and came to this country some time in 1872, he was a miner, and had a small cabin below here where Mr. Kelly has got his Dredge, he had a garden and raised all kinds of Vegetables and he also did a little Mining on the Bars in the summer time, he was rather a bad Character, and was very handy with his Gun, he made a lot of trouble here for Mr. MacKinley who was the H.B. agent here at that time, MacKinley also was just as good as Dan, and arrested him and took him out to Edmonton, where he was put in Jail for a short time, this was in 1883, however Dan was let out in 1884 or 85 and went across the Mountains by the Jasper Pass, along with 5 or 6 men and this was the last of old Dan, as his partners was blamed for putting an end to him.